




Urban Design

November 1, 2005

Form Based Zoning
Transit Oriented Areas
Mixed Use Districts
Residential Areas





Before we get started, like to remind everyone what we're talking about when we use the term "urban design." Urban design is the visual motif of the city, or a particular part, to achieve a high quality of life for the public. Goal is to promote livability, meaning a high quality public realm and a sense of place. Regulation schemes to do this may be different than what we have. For example, the idea of form-based regulations (controlling form over use), control buildings, street patterns, and streetscape elements.

There are 6 identified urban design principals that are applicable to the City.

- Mixed density – for all income levels and interests / support transportation alternatives
- Design Standards – new development can respond to traditional architectural styles of the City – ensure design is sensitive to context
- Walkable Centers – compact, served by public transit – requires review of sidewalk and street standards
- Enhance Streetscapes – Achieve pedestrian friendly environments – quality public spaces
- Uses – variety of uses within a neighborhood create vitality and activities of daily living within walking distance of homes (creates pedestrian friendly atmospheres)
- Infill – not a lot infill left in the City, but includes redevelopment which will be a large part of our future development – requires new look at standards which were developed for greenfield development

Steps to Good Urban Design

- ☛ Analyze the Existing Context
 - Master Plan
 - Neighborhood Plans
 - White Papers
 - Existing Policies / Requirements
- ☛ Establish a Vision
- ☛ Implement the Vision



The zoning revision is limited in what we can do by a number of things. We have now discussed in the UD and CP presentations the various guiding policies placed on this revision – master plan, neighborhood plans, legal requirements (MD law), and considerations such as these White papers (in depth discussions on particular issues) and existing policies (art in public places, DRC, etc.- what works and what doesn't)

Establish a vision – many particular visions in the city's master and neighborhood plans, these white papers

Overarching vision – “livability”

- High quality development – pleasant street atmosphere, environmentally friendly development requirements, flexibility in design options
- Walkability – safe, pleasant, and convenient paths to and from transit / civic and urban activity centers / work / shopping / home
- Affordability – ability to provide quality housing and transportation options at affordable prices to the average citizen – both low and moderate incomes

Implement – Will involve revision of other chapters of the City Code. With regard to zoning – number options we've talked about in the past presentations. Following is more particular recommendations to implement vision.

Form Based Zoning

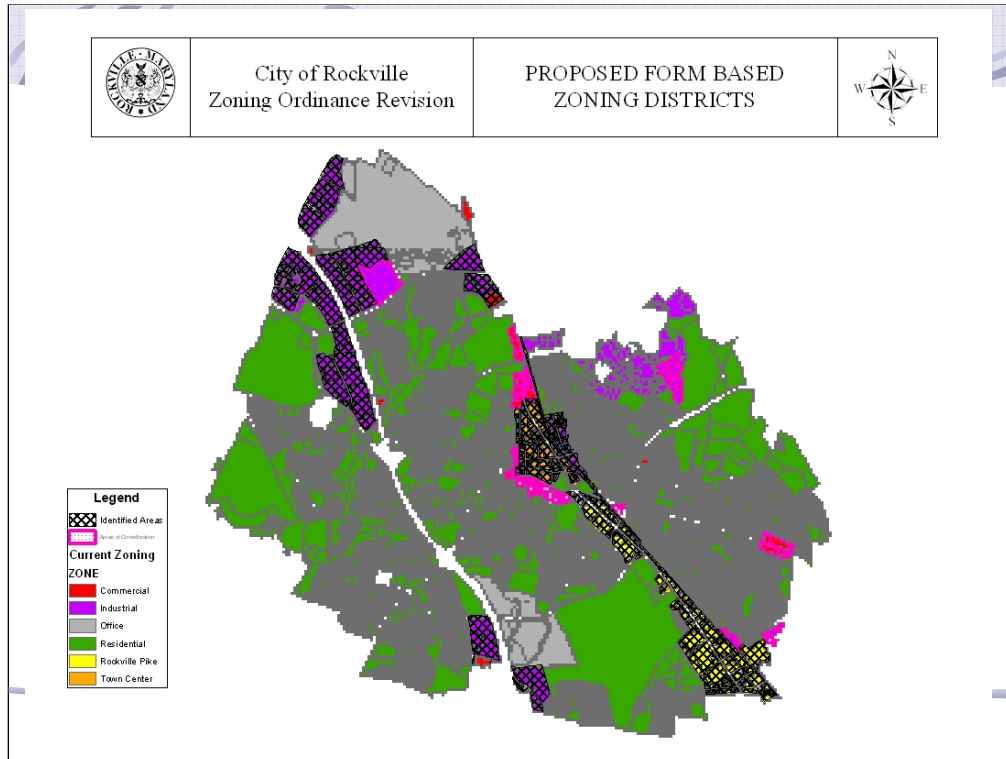
- Recap of definition
- Proposed locations
 - Rockville Pike
 - Town Center
 - I-3, campus-style industrial
 - College Plaza
 - Additional possibilities



The next few slides discuss the further developed particular recommendations of staff.

Form based zoning – one of those new urbanist responses to the problems of Euclidian zoning (use concentration) zoning. FB Zoning emphasizes 1) physical form and 2) prescriptive rules (what community does want to see). – In particular, FBZ focuses on the development of lots as an answer to the problem of use separation. Often flexible and regulates to maintain the existing DNA of the city.

Today want to address the proposed locations. As we go forward with the outline (the next step in the revision process after white and issue papers), we'll address the particular regulations to be used in Rockville.

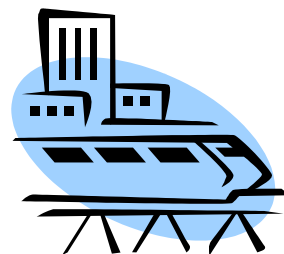


The black cross-hatched areas are identified areas for form-based zoning in the City. These are I-3, Rockville Pike, and Town Center zones in addition to College Plaza.

The pink areas are secondary identified areas for potential form based zoning districts. These areas are mostly commercial and office with some industrial areas. They are identified because of the age of the existing development (and likelihood for redevelopment) or proximity to other identified form based zoning areas.

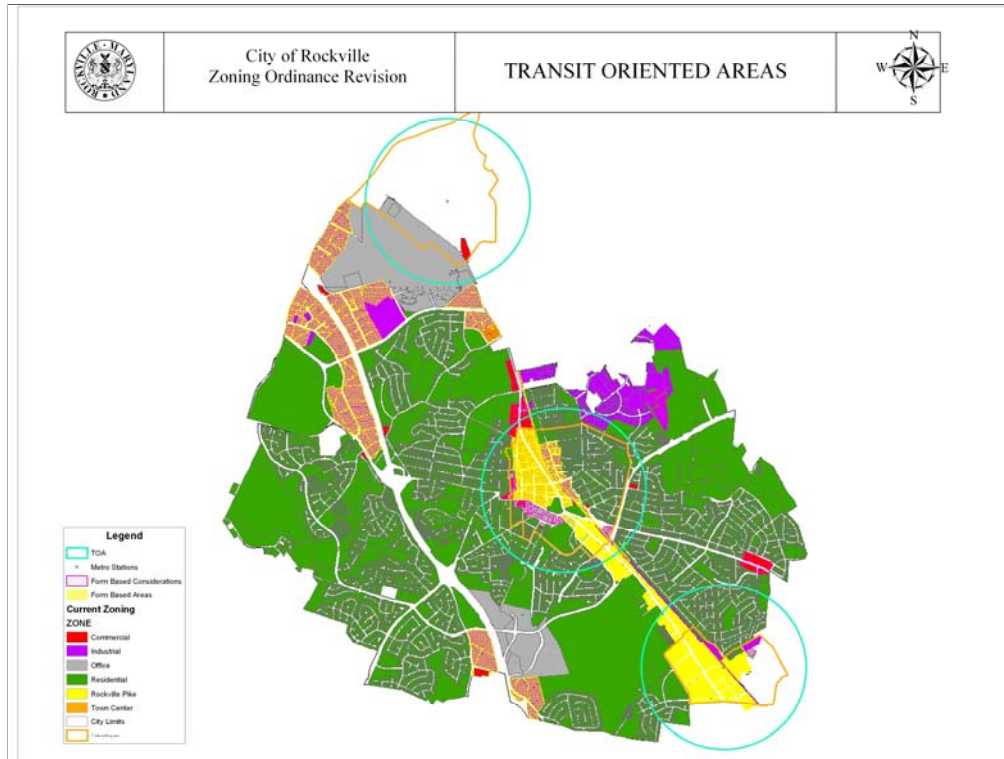
Transit Oriented Areas

- ☛ Designated already
- ☛ Core identified for form based
- ☛ Residential mostly same
- ☛ Update street design
- ☛ May be additional incentives



Transit oriented areas are already designated in the City through the Comprehensive Transportation review.

- Core areas of these (around metro center) already recommended locations of form based zoning (discussed last slide) – ensure that quality urban design is provided within walkable radius from station to create quality design, attract pedestrians
- Residential – where residential areas fall in TOA, with the possible exception of Stonestreet corridor, staff recommends maintaining residential designation – in accord with neighborhood plans’ recommendations
- Update Street Design – should be done in conjunction with zoning revision. Within a TOA, sidewalk standards will be applied to link the metro centers to shopping and residential areas – not only address the size but also design of the streetscape to encourage use of these paths
- Additional incentives – November 28, come back with more recommendations on optional methods. One recommendation of staff was a standard method – if developer does X incentive, get Y amenities – in these areas want to especially encourage quality development, should be more willing to offer added densities for additional benefits to the city (brick sidewalks, additional plantings, etc.)



Blue circles are the .7 mile radius around metro stations (the TOA) as the crow flies. The orange shape inside those circles is the .7 mile actual walking radius around the metro stations.

Yellow and pink show the identified form based areas – as you can see they are primarily in the center of these areas.

Green is the existing established residential districts.

Mixed Use Districts

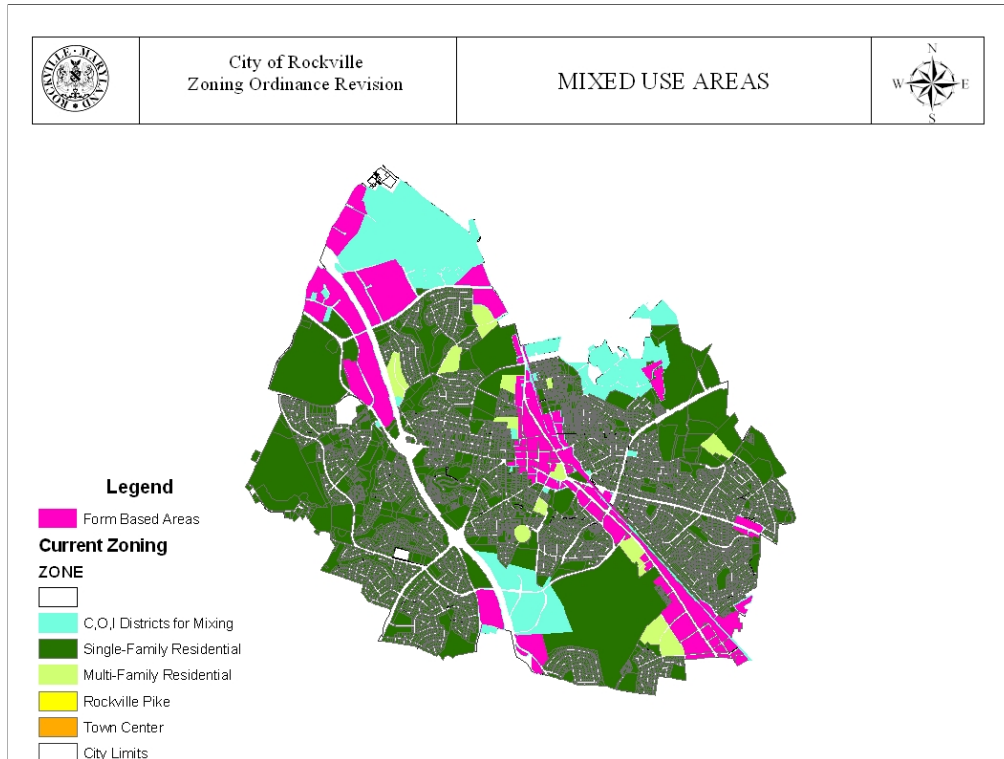
- Commercial, Industrial, Office
- Multi-family accessories
- Will add limitations
- Particulars in drafting



Staff recommends reviewing standard commercial, industrial, and office districts. In addition, accessory uses in multi-family zones (R-20, R-30, R-H) should be reviewed to determine if additional small retail uses should be permitted in those zones.

Limitations on maximum size and types of uses – all to be determined in drafting stage but should be included in regulations.

More on this will be in a paper on uses to be discussed in January.



Highlighted areas of blue and green. Pink are form based areas that have been identified. Blue are commercial, office, and industrial areas not designated for form based designation. Light green are multi-family zones where accessory structures might be considered for different uses, especially retail. As the process continues, will further examine these areas – if any determined not suitable for form based zoning, then will consider mixed use districts.

Dark green areas are all single-family residential districts that currently exist. Staff recommends that they stay essentially the same.

Residential Districts

- Residential feel
- Neighborhood centers
- Maintain existing
- Review bulk regulations



There remains a number of primarily residential areas where auto transit is necessary to reach any service location – challenge of the revision is to retain the primary residential feel but to increase walkability in these neighborhoods.

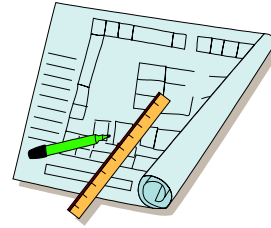
Staff reviewed the option of identifying neighborhood centers and placing zoning regulations on these locations to increase access through walking. Neighborhood centers provide gathering places for citizens and living necessities (groceries, activity centers, recreation options). Concern 1) more where needed and 2) promote higher quality design and maintenance of what exists. To do so, street design guidelines need to be amended to ensure that areas around the centers are walkable.

Identification and re-zoning of all existing neighborhood centers is primarily a master plan process and may take a substantial amount of time. As an alternative, flexible regulations could be applied as requested. A broad floating zone, an overlay district, or special incentives for desirable development are options to be considered for the revision with regard to neighborhood centers.

Remaining residential areas would stay mostly the same. Recommendations in individual neighborhood plans will be reviewed for particular application to individual neighborhoods. Where no plans yet completed, revision will re-examine bulk requirements to determine if they are too extensive for the type of development that has appeared in each neighborhood. Overlays applying individual bulk regulations to individual neighborhoods may be applicable.

Design Guidelines

- ▮ Neighborhoods who request them
- ▮ Condition of approval
- ▮ Broad
- ▮ Outside of ordinance itself
- ▮ Few general requirements in ordinance



Staff recommends applying design guidelines only to those neighborhoods that have included the recommendation in their neighborhood plan. In addition, guidelines may continue to be condition of approval for special development options – as they were for King Farm and Fallsgrove.

Should be broad enough to not regulate for taste but specific enough to provide guidance to staff and to encourage consistent review.

Should be maintained outside of the ordinance but referenced so as to inform public that additional considerations will be applied to development within a particular area.

Staff is also considering general design regulations to be included in the code. These would be added as additional dimensional standards already in the requirements. In particular, a requirement that all visible sides of a structure have a quality façade is one.